



# The Wildlife Society's Conservation Affairs Network

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## ***Take Action!***

***North American Wetlands Conservation Act Reauthorization*** – The North American Wetlands Conservation Act provides funding that enables wildlife professionals to conserve and support robust waterfowl and other wetland wildlife populations across North America. This grant program is currently being considered for reauthorization by Congress, which would help ensure its future funding and success. Staff Contact: [Keith Norris](#)

- Who Should Act: U.S. Members
- Deadline for Action: near future
- Action to Take: Use the [TWS Action Center](#) to contact your members of Congress and urge them to support reauthorization of this important program
- Resources: [NAWCA Policy Brief](#)  
[Legislation Status](#)

## **CAC Activities**

***Moose Research Restrictions addressed by Minnesota Chapter*** – The Minnesota Chapter recently [submitted a letter to the Governor](#) which outlined their concerns regarding [Executive Order 15-10](#), issued by the Governor in April 2015. This order ceased all moose capturing and radio-collaring research in the state. The Chapter's letter outlines the need for wildlife research in order to have science-based management decisions and calls for an external review of the moose research practices so that they can continue. MN Chapter CAC Contact: [Jodie Provost](#)

***Oregon Chapter Calls for Support of Bird Seed Bill*** - The Oregon Chapter has called their members to action to encourage their state legislators to pass a bill that will support native bird conservation in the state. The Wild Bird Act, H.B. 2171, would place a \$0.05 per pound tax on wild bird seed sold in the state. These funds would then be used to support the conservation of native bird species, including sage grouse. Chapter members are sending emails to their state legislators to urge them to support the passage of this bill. OR Chapter CAC Contact: [Todd Mabee](#)

***Western Section Comments on Proposed Changes to Permit Process*** – The Western Section has [submitted comments](#) on proposed changes to California Department of Fish and Wildlife's scientific collection permitting process. Western Section CAC Contact: [Steve Juarez](#)

***Captive Cervid Battle in North Carolina*** - The North Carolina Chapter is planning to submit a letter in the next several days to their state Senate urging them to oppose legislation which would transfer management authority of captive cervids from the state's Department of Wildlife Resources to the state agriculture department. The letter outlines concerns regarding the potential for disease transmission and public trust doctrine considerations of captive wildlife. NC Chapter CAC Contact: [Mike Baranski](#)

## Issue Spotlight

***Lacey Act Court Case and TWS Involvement*** - TWS and two of its partner organizations, the Center for Invasive Species Prevention and the Natural Areas Association, recently submitted a ‘Friend of the Court’ brief to the federal court in a case involving importation of non-native species under the [Lacey Act](#). In the case, USARK v. Jewell, the U.S. Association of Reptile Keepers is challenging the ability of the federal government to prohibit interstate movement of non-native species determined under the Lacey Act to be ‘injurious species.’ [In our brief, TWS supported the government’s interpretation](#) of the law and discussed the harmful effects that invasive species can have on native ecosystems. The court has granted a preliminary injunction to USARK, which means they are likely to succeed in their claims. If USARK is ultimately successful in the case, the government’s ability to regulate the interstate movement of injurious species will be hampered, possibly leading to increased establishment of invasive species and making it more difficult to fight non-native diseases like deadly fungal pathogens.

Staff Contact: [Laura Bies](#)

## On the Horizon

***CAN Meeting at the TWS Annual Conference – TBD – Winnipeg, Manitoba*** – The Conservation Affairs Network will have our annual meeting during The Wildlife Society’s Annual Conference, October 17-21, 2015. More details regarding the specific date and time of the meeting will be announced in the coming months. [Be sure to register for the conference](#) so you can attend our meeting and participate in all of the professional development and networking opportunities that the conference offers. Staff Contact: [Keith Norris](#)

## Toolbox

***LegiScan Tool*** – [LegiScan](#) is an online tool that allows users to track National and State-level legislation. LegiScan allows users to track bills introduced to a state legislature and receive email alerts for up to three saved keyword searches – completely free. Chapters can use LegiScan to track their own state legislation for wildlife-related issues in order to more quickly and effectively respond to policy issues in their state.

***Working Groups are Resource of Technical Expertise*** – Members of TWS’s Working Groups can be a great resource for Sections and Chapters wishing to respond to policy and legislation issues. For example, TWS Staff worked closely with the [Wetlands Working Group](#) to draft comments on the EPA and Army Corps of Engineers proposed “Waters of the United States” rule. Using the scientific expertise of the working group members, [the comments suggest language changes](#) that would better reflect the inter-connected nature of aquatic systems. Earlier this year, USDA-APHIS released a draft environmental impact statement on feral swine damage management. TWS utilized the expertise of the [Wildlife Damage Management Working Group](#) to provide [input](#) on the alternatives proposed by the agency. Our [Wildlife Diseases Working Group](#) played an integral role in the development of the [TWS/AAWV Joint Issue Statement on Domestic Sheep and Goats Disease Transmission Risk to Wild Sheep](#).

View the entire list of the [TWS working groups](#) and see if there are any technical experts that your CAC can tap to assist with policy engagement activities and ensure science is integrated into policy decisions.

## **Policy Partnerships**

The Wildlife Society has worked closely with the [National Wildlife Refuge Association](#) to address two pieces of legislation currently being considered by Congress. The National Wildlife Refuge Association (NWRA) is an organization dedicated to preserving America's wildlife heritage for future generations by enhancing the National Wildlife Refuge System. NWRA makes a great partner for TWS, as Refuge System lands employ wildlife professionals and are dedicated to managing and conserving wildlife for the benefit of America's public.

We have worked closely with NWRA to address the [Corolla Wild Horse Protection Act](#), which would remove wildlife professionals from management decisions regarding the population of wild horses on Currituck National Wildlife Refuge. We have also worked with NWRA to oppose legislation which [would ban several types of traps on refuges](#), greatly impacting the ability of refuge staff to appropriately manage wildlife populations on refuges across the country.

NWRA has a [network of "Friends Groups"](#) that could serve as excellent partners for your CAC. Reach out to these groups when an issue may impact the management or wildlife on a local refuge and look for opportunities to strengthen your actions by working together.

### **REQUEST FOR MATERIAL**

The success of the Conservation Affairs Network and TWS's policy program depends upon your involvement! Send us any relevant policy issue within your region or state that you need assistance addressing. If your CAC has successfully engaged in a policy issue, we want to hear about it! We want to hear your stories, issues, concerns, upcoming policy issues, and action items for inclusion in this bi-monthly newsletter and other Network communications.

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